841 tribe of the Caucasus, but not to the one of the Khevsurs. The Khevsur is forbidden to take part in the construction of a *samrevlo*. This rule is enjoined by the *Khati*, the patron saint of the group. If the rule is violated, the Khevsur believes he will be punished by the *Khati*[1]: his herds and flocks will be killed, his whole property destroyed, and he himself will be driven away.

The samrevlo is a small quadrangular hut, so low that a man cannot stand upright in it. It is built of stones, generally without any mortar, with a low roof of straw or timber and mud, with one small door facing the village and one small hole in the roof serving as a window and also as an outlet for smoke. There is no furniture at all, but just some straw on the earthen floor around the hearth in the center, and a few dishes and a jar for water.

784 The women who occupy a *samrevlo*,[2] or, to use the Georgian
841 expression, who are *samrevloth gasuli*—meaning in English, "gone to the *samrevlo*"—strew charcoal around the hut in order to keep away the evil spirits, who are supposed to be afraid of charcoal.

[278] Incidentally, it should be noted that, because of the magical power which the people ascribe to charcoal, it is used in many instances for medical purposes and as protection against the evil spirits, as in the case of the *samrevlo*.

841 These huts of the menstruating women—the *samrevlos* of the Khevsurs and Pshavs—are situated usually together near a river or brook outside the village, about one mile distant from it. Be-
[844] sides the menstruating women, the women with new-born babies also live in the *samrevlo*. They move from the *kokhi*—the special huts for childbirth—into the *samrevlo* within a few days after delivery.

Among the Svans also, as among the Khevsurs, Pshavs and Tushes, the woman with monthly issue is regarded as highly unclean and her husband does not dare at that time to enter the sanctuary (*Khati*) or to bring a sacrifice to the patron saint of the community, because he himself is regarded as unclean and unworthy in the eyes of the deity. Unlike the Khevsurs, Pshavs and Tushes, the Svans do not build special huts for their menstruating women; and the Tushes, whose country is nearer the civilized

1 [see cat. 116, p. 25 ff. -- Analyst]
2 i.e. menstrual hut; see cat 116, pp. 91-92 -- Analyst]

6. Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

783 562 passes everything, one after another, over the fire, and at this time she is obliged to say the words established by custom: "Fire, give thy purity." After the *matusva,* she must put the things out of the *samrevlo* and shake them well. This is the second part of the purification and is called *gamotskepa.* And at last she must sprinkle everything with holy water which is brought to her for this purpose from the home. She takes the water into her mouth and so sprinkles the things. This last part of the purification is called *shapkhukeba.*

Only after the accomplishment of all the above-mentioned tasks are the woman, her baby and belongings regarded as clean and as having the right to enter the home of her family.

● 278 The "holy" water which is used by the woman for the purification is the water which is blessed by the preacher during the church ceremonies in commemoration of Christ's baptism. The people take the water home and preserve it in bottles for such future use as cleansing, purifying, and medical purposes. This custom is in universal use throughout Georgia. I remember seeing such bottles in many houses. The water is regarded by the people as medicine against almost every kind of disease: such as sore eyes, stomach trouble, headache, etc.

844 562 Among the Svans also, the woman lying in childbed is regarded as unclean and is put in a separate place but not in a special hut built for her sojourn. The woman is in isolation and in considered as unclean until the priest says special prayers of purification upon her and the baby. Not only contact, as was mentioned above concerning the women in menstruation, but even the mere presence of such a woman in the neighborhood makes a hunter polluted and consequently unable to take part in the hunting expedition.

844 787 When the Khevsur woman is in travail during childbirth and her loud screams and cries are heard far from the *kokhi,* her husband and relatives approach the hut and with loud shouts fire their guns in order to keep away evil spirits. Or sometimes the husband runs into the hut, places his gun on the shoulder of his suffering wife, and shouts to her words of encouragement while firing his gun. He does this only with the aim of driving